



[4910-13-P]

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Aviation Administration

14 CFR Part 39

[Docket No. FAA-2018-0726; Product Identifier 2017-SW-097-AD]

RIN 2120-AA64

Airworthiness Directives; Leonardo S.p.A. Helicopters

AGENCY: Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), DOT.

ACTION: Notice of proposed rulemaking (NPRM).

SUMMARY: We propose to adopt a new airworthiness directive (AD) for Leonardo S.p.A. (Type Certificate Previously Held by Finmeccanica S.p.A., AgustaWestland S.p.A.) Model AW109SP helicopters. This proposed AD would require inspecting and altering the rescue hoist. This proposed AD is prompted by a report of a damaged hoist cable that detached after load application. The actions of this proposed AD are intended to address an unsafe condition on these products.

DATES: We must receive comments on this proposed AD by [INSERT DATE 60 DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER].

ADDRESSES: You may send comments by any of the following methods:

- Federal eRulemaking Docket: Go to <http://www.regulations.gov>. Follow the online instructions for sending your comments electronically.
- Fax: 202-493-2251.

- Mail: Send comments to the U.S. Department of Transportation, Docket Operations, M-30, West Building Ground Floor, Room W12-140, 1200 New Jersey Avenue SE, Washington, DC 20590-0001.

- Hand Delivery: Deliver to the “Mail” address between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays.

Examining the AD Docket

You may examine the AD docket on the Internet at <http://www.regulations.gov> by searching for and locating Docket No. FAA-2018-0726; or in person at Docket Operations between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays. The AD docket contains this proposed AD, the European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) AD, the economic evaluation, any comments received, and other information. The street address for Docket Operations (telephone 800-647-5527) is in the ADDRESSES section. Comments will be available in the AD docket shortly after receipt.

For service information identified in this proposed rule, contact Leonardo S.p.A. Helicopters, Matteo Ragazzi, Head of Airworthiness, Viale G.Agusta 520, 21017 C.Costa di Samarate (Va) Italy; telephone +39-0331-711756; fax +39-0331-229046; or at <http://www.leonardocompany.com/-/bulletins>. You may review the referenced service information at the FAA, Office of the Regional Counsel, Southwest Region, 10101 Hillwood Pkwy, Room 6N-321, Fort Worth, TX 76177.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: David Hatfield, Aviation Safety Engineer, Safety Management Section, Rotorcraft Standards Branch, FAA, 10101 Hillwood Pkwy., Fort Worth, TX 76177; telephone (817) 222-5110; email david.hatfield@faa.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Comments Invited

We invite you to participate in this rulemaking by submitting written comments, data, or views. We also invite comments relating to the economic, environmental, energy, or federalism impacts that might result from adopting the proposals in this document. The most helpful comments reference a specific portion of the proposal, explain the reason for any recommended change, and include supporting data. To ensure the docket does not contain duplicate comments, commenters should send only one copy of written comments, or if comments are filed electronically, commenters should submit only one time.

We will file in the docket all comments that we receive, as well as a report summarizing each substantive public contact with FAA personnel concerning this proposed rulemaking. Before acting on this proposal, we will consider all comments we receive on or before the closing date for comments. We will consider comments filed after the comment period has closed if it is possible to do so without incurring expense or delay. We may change this proposal in light of the comments we receive.

Discussion

EASA, which is the Technical Agent for the Member States of the European Union, has issued AD No. 2017-0025, dated February 14, 2017, to correct an unsafe condition for Leonardo S.p.A. (formerly Finmeccanica S.p.A, AgustaWestland S.p.A.) Model AW109SP helicopters. EASA advises that a hoist cable became snagged behind a hoist handle assembly nut and broke during a dummy load application. EASA further advises that this condition could result in detachment of an external load, and subsequent

personal injury or injury to persons on the ground. To address this unsafe condition, the EASA AD requires inspecting the hoist cable, modifying the rescue hoist handle, and amending the rescue hoist pre-flight inspection described in the rotorcraft flight manual.

FAA's Determination

These helicopters have been approved by the aviation authority of Italy and are approved for operation in the United States. Pursuant to our bilateral agreement with Italy, EASA, its technical representative, has notified us of the unsafe condition described in its AD. We are proposing this AD because we evaluated all known relevant information and determined that an unsafe condition is likely to exist or develop on other helicopters of the same type design.

Related Service Information Under 1 CFR part 51

We reviewed Leonardo Helicopters Bollettino Tecnico No. 109SP-110, dated February 13, 2017 (BT 109SP-110), which contains procedures for inspecting the hoist handle, the passenger-side cabin doorframe, and the hoist cable. This service information also specifies replacing the attaching hardware on the rescue hoist handle and adding a temporary pre-flight check of the hoist cable to the Rotorcraft Flight Manual.

This service information is reasonably available because the interested parties have access to it through their normal course of business or by the means identified in the ADDRESSES section.

Proposed AD Requirements

This proposed AD would require, within 10 hours time-in-service (TIS) or before the next hoist operation, whichever occurs first, inspecting the hoist handle assembly and the upper section of the cabin doorframe for chafing caused by the hoist cable. If there is

any chafing, this proposed AD would require, before further flight, repairing the damage and inspecting the first 6 meters (20 feet) of the hoist cable for cable diameter, broken wires, kinks, bird caging, flattened areas, abrasion, and necking. If the cable dimension is less than 4.70 mm (0.185 inch), or if there are any broken wires, kinks, bird caging, flattened areas, abrasion, or necking, this proposed AD would require, before the next hoist operation, replacing the hoist cable.

This proposed AD would also require, within 25 hours TIS, replacing the rescue hoist handle attaching hardware.

Differences between this Proposed AD and the EASA AD

The EASA AD requires amending the rotorcraft flight manual by adding a daily rescue hoist cable preflight inspection, this proposed AD does not since the actions in this proposed AD would correct the unsafe condition.

Costs of Compliance

We estimate that this proposed AD would affect 30 helicopters of U.S. Registry.

At an average labor rate of \$85 per hour, we estimate that operators may incur the following costs in order to comply with this AD. Inspecting the hoist handle assembly, cabin doorframe, and hoist cable would require about 2 hours, for a cost of \$170 per helicopter and \$5,100 for the U.S. fleet. Replacing the hardware on the hoist handle assembly would require about 1 hour and required parts cost would be minimal, for a cost of \$85 per helicopter and \$2,550 for the U.S. fleet.

If required, replacing a hoist cable would require about 3 hours and required parts would cost \$3,150, for a cost per helicopter of \$3,405.

According to Leonardo Helicopter’s service information some of the costs of this proposed AD may be covered under warranty, thereby reducing the cost impact on affected individuals. We do not control warranty coverage by Leonardo Helicopters. Accordingly, we have included all costs in our cost estimate.

Authority for This Rulemaking

Title 49 of the United States Code specifies the FAA’s authority to issue rules on aviation safety. Subtitle I, section 106, describes the authority of the FAA Administrator. “Subtitle VII: Aviation Programs,” describes in more detail the scope of the Agency’s authority.

We are issuing this rulemaking under the authority described in “Subtitle VII, Part A, Subpart III, Section 44701: General requirements.” Under that section, Congress charges the FAA with promoting safe flight of civil aircraft in air commerce by prescribing regulations for practices, methods, and procedures the Administrator finds necessary for safety in air commerce. This regulation is within the scope of that authority because it addresses an unsafe condition that is likely to exist or develop on products identified in this rulemaking action.

Regulatory Findings

We determined that this proposed AD would not have federalism implications under Executive Order 13132. This proposed AD would not have a substantial direct effect on the States, on the relationship between the national Government and the States, or on the distribution of power and responsibilities among the various levels of government.

For the reasons discussed, I certify this proposed regulation:

1. Is not a “significant regulatory action” under Executive Order 12866;
2. Is not a “significant rule” under the DOT Regulatory Policies and Procedures (44 FR 11034, February 26, 1979);
3. Will not affect intrastate aviation in Alaska to the extent that it justifies making a regulatory distinction; and
4. Will not have a significant economic impact, positive or negative, on a substantial number of small entities under the criteria of the Regulatory Flexibility Act.

We prepared an economic evaluation of the estimated costs to comply with this proposed AD and placed it in the AD docket.

List of Subjects in 14 CFR Part 39

Air transportation, Aircraft, Aviation safety, Incorporation by reference, Safety.

The Proposed Amendment

Accordingly, under the authority delegated to me by the Administrator, the FAA proposes to amend 14 CFR part 39 as follows:

PART 39 - AIRWORTHINESS DIRECTIVES

1. The authority citation for part 39 continues to read as follows:

Authority: 49 U.S.C. 106(g), 40113, 44701.

§ 39.13 [Amended]

2. The FAA amends § 39.13 by adding the following new airworthiness directive (AD):

Leonardo S.p.A. (Type Certificate Previously Held by Finmeccanica S.p.A., AgustaWestland S.p.A): Docket No. FAA-2018-0726; Product Identifier 2017-SW-097-AD.

(a) Applicability

This AD applies to Model AW109SP helicopters, certificated in any category, with a rescue hoist part number 109-B810-16-101 or 109-B810-16-201 installed.

(b) Unsafe Condition

This AD defines the unsafe condition as chafing of a rescue hoist cable. This condition could result in detachment of an external load and subsequent injury to persons being lifted.

(c) Comments Due Date

We must receive comments by [INSERT DATE 60 DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE Federal Register].

(d) Compliance

You are responsible for performing each action required by this AD within the specified compliance time unless it has already been accomplished prior to that time.

(e) Required Actions

(1) Within 10 hours time-in-service (TIS) or before the next hoist operation, whichever occurs first, inspect the rescue hoist handle assembly and the upper part of the cabin doorframe for chafing. The inspection area of the cabin doorframe is depicted in Figure 3 of Leonardo Helicopters Bollettino Tecnico No. 109SP-110, dated February 13, 2017 (BT 109SP-110). Examples of chafing are shown in Figures 10 and 11 of

BT 109SP-110. If there is any chafing, before further flight, repair the chafed areas and inspect the first 6 meters (20 feet) of the hoist cable as follows:

(i) Measure the diameter of the hoist cable as described in the Compliance Instructions, Part I, paragraphs 3.4.1 through 3.4.2 of BT 109SP-110.

(ii) Average the two measurements at each location. If at any location the diameter of the hoist cable is less than 4.7 mm (0.185 inch), before the next hoist operation, remove the hoist cable from service.

(iii) Inspect the hoist cable for broken wires, kinks, bird caging, flattened areas, abrasion, and necking, referencing the examples shown and depicted in Figures 5 through 9 of BT 109SP-110. If there are any broken wires, kinks, bird caging, flattened areas, abrasion, or necking, before the next hoist operation, remove the hoist cable from service.

(2) Within 25 hours TIS, replace the rescue hoist handle attaching hardware as described in the Compliance Instructions, Part II, paragraphs 3 through 6, of BT 109SP-110.

(f) Special Flight Permits

A one-time special flight permit may be granted provided that the hoist is not used.

(g) Alternative Methods of Compliance (AMOCs)

(1) The Manager, Safety Management Section, Rotorcraft Standards Branch, FAA, may approve AMOCs for this AD. Send your proposal to: David Hatfield, Aviation Safety Engineer, Safety Management Section, Rotorcraft Standards Branch, FAA,

10101 Hillwood Pkwy., Fort Worth, TX 76177; telephone (817) 222-5110; email
9-ASW-FTW-AMOC-Requests@faa.gov.

(2) For operations conducted under a 14 CFR part 119 operating certificate or under 14 CFR part 91, subpart K, we suggest that you notify your principal inspector, or lacking a principal inspector, the manager of the local flight standards district office or certificate holding district office before operating any aircraft complying with this AD through an AMOC.

(h) Additional Information

The subject of this AD is addressed in European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) AD No. 2017-0025, dated February 14, 2017. You may view the EASA AD on the Internet at <http://www.regulations.gov> in the AD Docket.

(i) Subject

Joint Aircraft Service Component (JASC) Code: Cabin/Equipment Furnishings.

Issued in Fort Worth, Texas, on August 6, 2018.

Lance T. Gant,

Director, Compliance & Airworthiness Division,
Aircraft Certification Service.

[FR Doc. 2018-17903 Filed: 8/20/2018 8:45 am; Publication Date: 8/21/2018]